لا إله إلا الله محمد رسول الله

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THE

REVIEW

OF RELIGIONS

Tabligh 1355—February 1976

EDITOR

M. G. AHMAD

The Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam

The Promised Messiah, Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, was born in 1835 at Qadian, a village in India. In the eighties of the 19th century, he was called to the office of World Reformer to combat the current of religious philosophies and to explode the Christian theory of redemption based on the fiction of Christ's death on the Cross and to tell the Christians and Muslims to call off their hope for a second visitfrom Christ as he had been gathered to his forefathers and barred like all mortals from coming back to the world, and that he had come instead as the Promised Messiah.

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The Promised Messiah initiated the Ahmadiyya Movement to revive faith in God, challenging rival churches to a spiritual contest to seek Divine sanction for the religion He favoured, through prayer and appeal to Him for guidance and arbitration in the matter, by means of His signs, to re-establish the glory of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, to expound and disseminate spiritual beauties and moral excellences of the teachings of the Holy Quran, to wean men from war-like tendencies and to educate world opinion in favour of renunciation of war as a means of settling disputes, to infuse hope, faith and courage in the drooping hearts of Muslims and all the depressed races and nations of the world, to warn the exploiters, slave-drivers, and pedlars in sin against the evil consequences of their evil ways, to collect under one banner all the true followers of Islam and lovers of peace and to inculcate among them the spirit of tolerance, good will and selfless fellow-service and a feeling of true brotherhood.

The Promised Messiah passed away in 1908 and was succeeded by his foremost votary and closest companion, Hazrat Hafiz Haji Hakim Maulvi Noor ud-Din as Khalifa-tul Masih I. After his death in 1914, the Promised Son of the Promised Messiah, Hazrat Haji Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, was chosen as Khalifa-tul Masih II. During his 52-year long leadership, the Khalifa-tul Masih II organized a world-girdling chain of mosques and missions. On his death on November 8, 1965, the electoral college named, with one accord, Sahibzada Hafiz Mirza Nasir Ahmad,Promised Messiah's grandson, Khalifa-tul Masih III.

For further information about the Movement, its activities, aims, objectives and literature, enquires may be addressed to the earest Ahmadiyya Mission or direct to :

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It is open to all for discussing problems vital to the religious and spiritual welfare of man, but it does not give any assurance to publish all articles received by the Editor, nor does it accept responsibility for views expressed by contributors.

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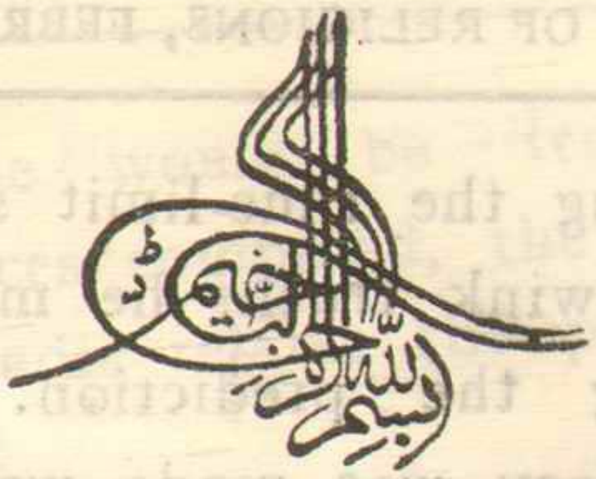

نحمدہٗ ونصلی علیٰ رسولہ الکریم

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FOUNDER OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT

A Short Biographical Sketch

— III —

By the late Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad M.A.

In short the above three prophecies were made by the Promised Messiah on the basis of Divine revelation and by the pure grace of God they were fulfilled in all their details within the limits of the conditions attached to them. These prophecies have two aspects. They concerned individuals as well as peoples and were thus of far-reaching consequences. They are an index to the Decree of God in respect of the three groups, as hinted by the Promised Messiah in "Shahadatul-Quran". A close study shows that of the two Muslims to whom the prophecy related one died within the fixed time-limit and the other was so awe-struck that he gave up all opposition to the Promised Messiah and thus remained safe from God's anger. The Christian concerning whom the prophecy was made was first panicky and over-awed by the truthfulness of Islam and therefore kept quiet.

He remained safe during the time-limit set in the prophecy but when he tried to hoodwink truth, he met his deserts in terms of the spirit underlying the prediction. The Hindu Samajist about whom the prophecy was made was boastfully defiant and remained in bitter opposition to Islam. He was totally denied the mercy of God therefore and died within the time-limit in an awe-inspiring manner. The Promised Messiah who was the spokesman of Islam in these three prophecies remained not only safe from every kind of pain ; God granted him increasing progress and prosperity. The three prophecies indicated the future of the three groups in relation to the Promised Messiah.

In the course of controversies, the Promised Messiah stressed in respect of prophecies, a point which is of universal application to all the miracles that since faith would be totally valueless if all things were made as clear as daylight, Allah has chosen to let in a measure of ambiguity in the Signs, it is therefore, that it never happens that all avenues to doubt should be totally sealed, for the sole object of signs is to provide a tangible basis for belief. The signs, he said, bear a light which may be compared to a partly clouded moonlit night when the brightness of moonlight is not so lustrous but is rather dim but clear enough for those who have eyes to see the way and to discriminate between things. It must therefore be clearly understood that in the early stages of faith, the light that is given is just enough to discriminate between the believer and the disbeliever so that belief earns merit. He explained that a measure of ambiguity that was discernible in the prophecies of prophets or in their miracles, leaving room for doubt, was according to the plan of God. Instead of entering into hair-splitting of every aspect of every prophecy and raising vague doubts, one should examine it as a whole and what it comes to, said the Promised Messiah. If, for instance, he said, a vicegerent of God had made a hundered prophecies and of these a large number had come true in clear terms leaving no reasonable ground for doubt but there was a small measure of

vagueness or ambiguity about a few, the man of God should not be disbelieved on that score. One should however see, he stressed, that the prophecies that have been made by him have served as the means of the manifestation of Divine knowledge and Divine Power, distinctly superior to human knowledge and human power. Another point that the Promised Messiah brought forth was that prophecies of misfortune, whether concerning an individual, a group or a people, owe their origin to the wickedness and mischief of the subject. In the event of the concerned party desisting and becoming quiet in awe, the prophecies of misfortune are averted. For, God is Compassionate and Generous. His mercy overwhelms His anger and it behoves Him not to lay His hands on the fallen or repentant foe. He says in the Holy Quran that He does not visit with affliction a forgiveness-seeking man. The Promised Messiah observed that prophecies of misfortune were conditional warnings whether the condition was stated plainly or not, the principle that repentence and forgiveness-seeking avert punishment, was inherently there.

Are Prayers Heard?

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At this time Muslims found themselves in a strange conundrum under the onslaught of the criticism of the western scholars and christian missionaries. A section of them was inclined towards Christianity, another was openly discarding faith and joining the ranks of atheists and yet a third or middle of the road section either because of love of Islam or on account of tribal impulses was not prepared to abandon its religion but was under the overwhelming weight of western criticism feeling itself in a difficult position. They resorted to such interpretations of Islamic theories and institutions as in their cumulative effect gave a wholly disfigured picture of the Holy Prophet's religion. This group was headed by Sir Sayyed Ahmad Khan, the founder of the Aligarh College. He had great love of the faith and was anxious to save Muslims from annihilation. But since Sir Sayyad was not a spiritual nor a religious person, his explanation of Islamic theories and institutions ran counter to the

very spirit of Islam. In fact his defence of Islam looked like the apology of a person who disowns a thing in the face of criticism, instead of warding off the enemy attack by expounding its excellencies. In this defeatiest mood, Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan repudiated much of Islam and represented certain parts in such a manner that Islam was seriously disfigured. When the Promised Messiah witnessed this humiliating spectacle, in his great jealousy for the honour of Islam, he raised his voice. In his work 'Ayina-e-Kamalat-i-Islam', he presented the true picture of Islam and rejected the weakkneed apologia of Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan and at the same time challanged the Christians to cross swords with him if they had any guts. He also wrote in 1893 a treatise 'Barkatuddu'a' exclusively on the subject of prayer, to meet the danger that Sir Sayyad's beliefs portended. Sayyad Ahmad Khan's theory was that prayer was merely a form of worship and could not affect the trend of general events of the world which are taking place in their particular shape and shall continue to do so under their respective fixed laws. The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) established the fact that the God of Islam is a living God who had not abdicated after creating the universe but held in His control everything at all time and though the law of measure and properties of things, in other words the laws of nature, being His own ordinances, are not subject to change except in rare cases yet, since He had power over His own laws, He could make any changes in it as and when it pleased Him to do so and that such interference was also part of His law and that accordingly now and then, He interferes with it for His special favourites and for special considerations and that such supervention on His part is known as miracle which is shown at times in answer to prayer and at time under His own independent will in the form of an extraordinary law. He proposed to show such miracles to anyone wishing a confirmation of his claim and invited people to repair to him for the purpose promising them a sign which he said, would by the grace of God, remove the darkness of

their doubts. Addressing Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, he said :

> "O you who ask where is the prayer that has an answer, hasten to me I will show it to you like the clear and bright sun. Aye deny not the hidden secrets of His power, for only His servants comprehend them. If you persist in this belief, long arguments are of no use. Cut it short and see a sample of a prayer that God has told me He has heard."

In a note on the above lines he pointed out that the prayer under reference was the one he had offered in respect of Pandit Lekh Ram and that God had foretold him that the Pandit who was pitted against Islam would be visited with a grievous affliction on the day next to an Id Festival within a period of six years.

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As a sign of the might of God, Pandit Lekh Ram died on the day next to I'd, on March 6, 1897, within the fixed term. The Promised Messiah remained safe. In fact he prospered rapidly. Even Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan lived to see with his own eeys the implementation of this "accepted prayer".

His Knowledge of Arabic

It has already been stated that the Promised Messiah learnt Arabic in his early age from private tutors. But this education was of an elementary nature and did not go beyond the early stages of the then current standards. He had this education at home and did not go to any metropolitan centre for higher studies. Under these conditions his educational qualifications were apparently of an ordinary standard. There were thousands of Ulema (Divines) in the Punjab and in India who far excelled him in book knowledge. But when God raised him for the service of Islam and enriched him with the knowledge of the Quran, He granted him at the same time an extraordinary grasp of Arabic. The Promised Messiah, accordingly, challenged the Ulema first in 1893 to come and compete with him in the

knowledge of Arabic. Some time later he announced that God had taught him forty thousand root-words of Arabic during the course of a single night and had given him such command over the language that no one could outdo him whether he were an Indian, an Egyptian or a Syrian. He repeated this claim with great force many a time till the end of his days but no e dared take up the challenge to write in Arabic. He went to the extent of saying that if an individual could not do so, he would not object to a party of Ulema joining hands in writing eolquent language of choice diction embodying wealth of subtle wisdom like his. None came forward. In the beginning the Indian Ulema ignored the challenge saying that Promi ed Messiah was keeping some Arab who was helping him secretly but when he extended his challenge to Arabs, Egyptians and Syrians, they were all quiet like a graveyard. The Promised Messiah's Arabic work consists both of prose and poetry and some poems runs into length and are in every metre and every rhyme and with such eloquence and rhetoric beauty that even Arab linguists were dumb founded. His prose too is very colourful.....simple as well classical, racing in every course till he excelled everybody and proved his worth. His Arabic works number twenty one. Of these *At-tabligh*, *Hamamatul-Bushra*, *Minanur-Rehman*, *Lujjatun-nur*, *Khutba Ilhamia*, *Al-Huda*, *Ijazul Masih* and *Seeratul Abdal* deserve to be specially mentioned.

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Eclipse of the Moon and the Sun

In 1894 God exhibited another powerful sign in support of the Promised Messiah. According to an early prophecy about the Promised Mahdi, in 1894 (1311 A.H.) during the month of Ramazan, both the moon and the sun were eclipsed. This eclipse was in no way of any conseqnence by itself, for, it is a common phenomena. But this particular eclipse had a special significance. Its dates had been given long in advance and it was said that at that time there would be a man claiming to be the Promis-

ed Mahdi and that he would be truly the man of God. As all these circumstances combined, the phenomenon became a significant sign. The Hadis relates the prophecy under reference in the following words :

> "The sign of our Mahdi is that at that time the moon will be eclipsed on the first days for its eclipse during the month of Ramazan and the sun will be eclipsed at the end of this month on a date in the middle of the days of its eclipse".

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In other words, the conditions for this sign were that (1) a claimant to the office of Mahdi shall be there already (2) It would be the month of Ramazan (3) on the 13th of this month (this is the first day of the dates for this phenomenon) the moon shall be eclipsed (4) on the 28th of this month (the middle date of the period for its eclipe) the sun shall be eclipsed. All this adds up to the great significance of this sign which appeared accordingly in 1894 as specified. The Promised Messiah claimed that such a sign with all its conditions had never appeared before and challenged his critics to prove to the contrary. No one could produce evidence to show that a similar phenomena had appeared ever before. The Holy Quran also hints at the phenomena, the appearance of which is bound up with certain circumstances (Sura Qiyamah). Jesus Christ also refers to this sign in the context of his second advent in the following words of the New Testament :

> "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light. And the stars of heaven shall fall and the power that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." (Mark ch. 13 : 24 –26)

The Promised Messiah has discussed this sign in detail in his book 'Nurul Haq'.

Arabic the Mother of Tongues

On the basis of Divine knowledge, the Promised Messiah claimed in 1895 that Arabic was the mother of all languages i.e. it was the source-language from which all the tongues of the current cycle of the world had sprung taking new shapes slowly through the passage of time and that it was therefore that God had given His last law-code in Arabic so that it may serve as a symbol of the universal character of the law, in the sense that it was for the entire world and for all the peoples. He wrote a thesis on this subject entitled *Minanur Rehman* but it is a matter of great regret that it could not be completed. But whatever has been written on the subject fully covers all the fundamental principles which can be amplified to round up the important enquiry. He has suggested three stages for dealing with the subject in this book :

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1. Proving such common field among languages as would establish their common source.
2. To prove that the common source from which the modern languages have originated is Arabic. To guide to this objective he put forth (i) the system of the elements of Arabic (ii) the system of its constructions (iii) the system of its etymology (iv) the comprehensiveness of meaning as against the constructions of its root-words and (v) the wisdom underlying its fundamental nouns.
3. To establish that Arabic is a revealed language i.e. it originated from the revelation of God.

This research of the Promised Messiah was apparently of an academic nature but a little consideration will show that it is ultimately linked up with the service of Islam. For, if it is proved that Arabic is in fact the mother of all tongues, it suddenly highlights the points that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) is the chief of all

Prophets and the Quran is the last and universal code.

The Promised Messiah followed up this enquiry with an advice to the Muslims to learn Arabic because, he said without such knowledge they could not adequately grasp the sense and meaning of the Holy Quran. He introduced a series of lessons to popularize Arabic language in his own community. It aimed at teaching Arabic through the use of colloquial terms and simple sentences current in every day usages. His aim was that Muslims of every country and race should make Arabic as their common second language and should therefore, pay special attention to learning it.

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A Memorial to Viceroy of India

Religious controversies were a great rage at this period throughout India. All groups were engaged in wrangle, one against the other. Severe attacks were exchanged. The founders of religions were the targets of all attacks. The atmosphere was extremely poisoned on account of this spirit of hostility. The Promised Messiah saw this state of affairs and felt its dangerous consequences. He proposed to address a memorandum to the Viceroy of India in this behalf and invited the sensible section of Muslim leadership to join him in this move. The memorandum proposed that since the existing law was not adequate to restrict to normalcy religious writings and talks and as the atmosphere in the country had become vitiated, adding to inter-communal bitterness and was adversely affecting public manners. Government should further amend the existing law and promulgate new measures to keep in proper limit the religious writings and lectures so that inter-communal relations are restored to a healthy tone. His idea was that (1) It should be enacted that no religious group shall make an attack against or find fault with another religion which does not recoil on its own religious belief. For, he argued, such fault-finding is a source of great mischief in as much as it has been observed that groups level attacks on founders of religions without first

looking into their own beliefs, unmindful of the fact that the same objections and criticism are applicable to their own religious leaders. (2) Every religious group should publish a list of recognized scriptures which are its holy basic sources giving at the same time their priority order. It should be enacted that no religious group shall in its criticism of the rival system go beyond the contents of the said scriptures. For, he said, that a lot of inter—communal bitterness was due to the fact that every little bit published by every Tom, Dick and Harry was made an excuse for levelling attacks against rival religions.

The Promised Messiah had these proposals in mind when he suggested submission of a representation on the subject to the Viceroy in 1895. He presented them in the form of Posters issued on his own behalf It is to be regretted that due to the jealousy-inspired interference of some short sighted persons, the proposal could not be materialized. Government too did not take any initiative in the matter and religious controversies grew more embittered with the passage of time.

In the year 1898 one biogoted Christian published a book entitled "Ummahatul Mominin" The author made vile and scurrilous attacks on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and on his holy wives. The Promised Messiah again presented his earlier proposal to the government in greater detail and in definite terms requsting that the existing law be enlarged in the interests of public morality and inter-communal peace, in such a manner as to bolt the door on unbecoming attacks. He further said that the proposed law should be applicable equally to every religious community without providing any concession or consideration for any group or sect. At the same time he pleaded with the Muslims that it was not proper to press the government for the proscription of the book and for the prosecution of its author as the book had been widely circulated and therefore its proscription would serve no purpose. He further argued that its proscription would de-

prive the Muslims logically of their right to a rejoinder which, as an appropriate remedy, should be issued exposing all the objection and criticism with cogent and pulverizing argument so as to lay bare their falsehood.

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The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) in a statement he made at this period of time, said that in his writings against his critics or other religions, he had used somewhat harsh language on certain occasions, invariably in defence only. His critics, he said, had always taken the initiative. Elucidating the point, he observed that his harsh rejoinders were intended to bring the rival parties to their senses so that under the impact of the counter-attack, they may learn to respect the sentiments of others. He reiterated his stand that he had never intended to hurt the feelings of others, that he was committed to an approach of love and peacefulness but that when the critics exceeded the limit, he felt constrained to use hard words for the sole purpose of restoring a measure of improvement and restraint in the atmosphere and never exceeded the limits set by propriety. If the rival groups desisted he would have no cause to resort even to mild counter-attacks, he observed.

Who was Guru Nanak ?

In the year 1895, the Promised Messiah announced the results of another astounding research. It was his discovery about Hazrat Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism. He produced evidence to establish the fact that Baba Nanak who was born in a Hindu house, was in fact a holy Muslim saint, that he had discarded the Hindu religion and embraced the Islamic faith, that he gave no new law of his own but was a true believer in the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) and in the law of the Holy Quran, that he worshipped like Muslims and observed all the ordinances of the Muslim faith. He further declared that Baba Nanak undertook the long journey to distant Mecca to perform the prescribed pilgrimage. Last but not the least, his evidence showed that

Baba Nanak's cloak which is venerated as a sacred relic and is to be found at Dera Baba Nanak, district Gurdaspur, was another proof of his being a true Muslim. The cloak is covered from top to bottom with the Muslim formula (the Kalmai-Tayyaba) and has Qu'anic verses incribed on it. This amazing discovery created a great stir among the Sikhs. The sensible section of the people were greatly impressed at this revelation but the masses made it yet another cause of violent outbursts against the Promised Messiah.

Seen in the light of the Promised Messiah's belief this discovery becomes greatly enhanced in value. The Promised Messiah believed that since God was not exclusively the God of one nation or one country and was the God of the whole universe and of the entire mankind, He has been sending His Prophets to different peoples at different times till the institution of Prophethood reached its pinnacle of perfection through the august person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Therefore, he argued, the Prophet or reformer who had a considerable following and a religious system established before the appearance of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him), could not be regarded an impostor as God would not grant popular acceptance to an impostor, as he does to His true Messenger. Otherwise he argued, both the impostor and the genuine prophet would be alike and there would be nothing left to discriminate between the two. The Promised Messiah (peace be on him) thus accepted as true prophets all the founders of religions who had preceded the Holy Prophet of Islam (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). Of the important peoples of the world the Sikh Community was an exception; its founder had appeared after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) in point of time. By establishing the fact that he was a Muslim saint, the Promised Messiah enlisted him among friends thus laying down firm the foundation of international peace and brotherhood. The Ahmadiyyat accordingly believes not only in

the holy prophets of the Jewish and Christian dispensations, it believes at the same time in Krishna of the Hindus, Gautam Budh of the Budhists, in Zoroaster of the Parsees and in Confucious of the Chinese and regards Baba Guru Nanak as a pious man of God. This discovery of the Promised Messiah is thus of two-fold significance.

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It creates for Baba Nanak feelings of profound respect among the Muslims and at the same time reminds the Sikhs that the lamp of their mansion reflects the light it received from Muhammad the Holiest of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him). It is a great pity that contemporary world has not yet cared to appreciate the great value of the principles expounded by the Promised Messiah (peace be on him).

Since the Promised Messiah had been raised to serve Islam, he put forward a truce proposal to his opponents inviting them to a seven-year ceasefire agreement to leave him free to combat, with undivided attention, the non-Islamic faiths. He said accordingly :

> "If you are unwilling to do any of these things then enter into a seven years truce agreement with me and my community to abstain from indulgence in anathema, in denunciation and to meet one another with affection and love. But if in these seven years there does not appear a manifestly effective service of Islam through me by the help of God and as is the death of false religion at the hands of the Messiah is decreed, if such death of false faiths does not take place through me, that is if Allah does not manifest through me the signs bespeaking the supremacy of Islam and whereby people start entering the fold of the Faith from every corner, and the false deity of Christendom perishes and the world takes on another hue, I solemnly declare on oath that I will treat my-

self an impostor and God knows that I am not an impostor. These seven years are not a very long time and such a revolution within such a short period is not within the power of any man. When, therefore, I, with a truthful heart and on solemn affirmation, invite you all to peace in the name of Allah, you should hence fear God. If I am not from Him I will perish as otherwise none can destroy the deputy of God".

It is a painful fact of history that his opponents did not accept this proposal. In fact they continued to miss all opportunities that came their way. The Promised Messiah made a repeat offer of the proposed truce in 1901 and through a poster inviting them to an agreement said that he had no wish to impose the condition that nothing should be said in his contradiction. He said that they would be free to do so and to publicise whatever errors they believed they espied in him and to justify their own belief with arguments but that they should not resort to abuse and to personal attacks and to personal insults and they should desist from promoting hatred and contempt and should instead use mild language and civilized and sympathic discourse and await the decision of God with patience and meekness, for, the sect enjoying His support will eventually dominate. This time his proposed truce period was three years only. It is a pity however that our stubborn and misguided opponents again rejected the proposal.

It was about this period that God granted the Promised Messiah a great triumph in another field by means of which he and through him Islam achieved the position of victorious conqueror over other faiths. It so happened that at the end of 1895 the Promised Messiah proposed through a poster to religious leaders of different peoples to hold a common meeting for enquiry into faiths as he thought God had provided manifold facilities for dissemination of knowledge in the world. He proposed that the meeting should be addressed by select represent-

atives of different faiths so that inter-religious re earch may be made easier. He extended invitation for holding of such a meeting on his own behalf at Qadian and offered to bear all the expenses of entertainments. Though unfortunately not a single community agreed to his proposal, but only a year later the Hindus put this proposal afresh on their own behalf fixing Lahore as its venue and 26th, 27th and 28th December 1896 as the dates of the conference to be addressed by representatives of different faiths, to enable people to appraise simultaneously the teachings of different religious systems. A set of fundamental questions was proposed for purposes of common discussion. Representatives of all the different people and faiths, Hindu, Sikhs, Brahmans and Muslims at once agreed to take part in the proposed conference. The Promised Messiah was also invited to participate. Thus God contrived to make his original move take shape and the laurels were ultimately his lot. At the same time by making the other party broach the proposal, He made his forthcoming victory all the more glorious. In short the proposed conference was held. The Promised Messiah contributed his lecture on the set of questions listed and announced in advance on the strength of Divine knowledge vouchsafed to him that God had told him that his thesis would be hailed as the top-most contribution and that Islam would achieve through it an outstanding victory. It transpired accordingly. Friends and foes, Muslims and non-Muslims were all at one that his contribution was by far the best. It had won such popular admiration that as the time-limit turned out to be too short for its complete reading, at the unanimous desire of the audience, the conference was extended by one day. All the parties, the Arya Samajists, the Christians, the Sikhs, the Brahmo Samajist and the non-Ahmadiyya group of Muslim read out their articles. All without a single exception however agreed that the thesis contributed by the Promised Messiah had outshone every other article. This victory came as the Promised Messiah had foretold through a poster. It was not a momentry success. When the thesis was

published in the form of a book and its English translation appeared, eminent scholars and papers of Europe and America acknowledged the beauty, power, excellence, originility and profound spiritual worth and unparalelled effect of this thesis and published their views in forceful reviews. In short the Promised Messiah was granted a grand victory at this platform where representatives of all faiths had gathered and thus that great Quranic prophecy that Islam would triumph over all other faiths when the Promised Messiah would make his appearance was fulfilled. The views of some western scholars about this thesis are reproduced below.

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Count Tolstoy: "The ideas are very profound and very true."

The English Mail: "A summary of really Islamic Ideas."

Theosophical Book Notes: "Admirably calculated to appeal to the student of comparative religion, who will find exactly what he wants to know as to Mohammedan doctrines on souls and bodies, divine existence, moral law and much else."

The Muslim Review (India): "A careful perusal of the little volume is well calculated to dissipate many of the misconceptions pervailing against Islam."

The Milwakee Journal: "The contents have been entirely drawn from the Holy Quran."

The Bristol Times and Mirror: "Clearly it is no ordinary person who thus addresses himself to the West."

The Spiritual Journal (Boston): "Pure Gospel."

Death of Pandit Lekh Ram

The year 1897 was one of tremendous upheaval. It was in the begining of the year, to be exact, the 6th of March when in accordance with his prophecy referred to above, made in 1893, Pandit Lekh Ram met his death in Lahore at the hands of an unknown assassin. As foretold Lekh Ram's death occurred on the day next to I'd festival. The incident inflamed the feelings of the entire Hindu community of India against the

Promised Messiah. Instead of being terror-stricken at the fulfilment of the prophecy, they began to accuse the Promised Messiah of conspiracy to get Pandit Lekh Ram murdered. The Promised Messiah declared repeatedly on solemn affirmation that he had no hand in it exeept that he had prophesied the end of Lekh Ram on the basis of Divine revelation. The Arya Samajists were however not satisfied and lodged a report with the Government and had the Promised Messiah's house searched. Secret Police was also assigned special duties. But since the Promised Messiah had no hand in the affair, nothing incriminaing against him was to be found. In order however to set the doubts of Hindus at rest, the Promised Messiah proposed and repeatedly made the proposal that if some one among them still suspected him of complicity in the murder of Pandit Lekh Ram, he should boldly confront him and on solemn affirmation accuse him in so many words of conspiring to get Lekh Ram slain. He declared that such a person would suffer annihilation within the term of one year in a manner leaving no room for any suspicion of a human hand in the affair. Should such a person survive one year, the Promised Messiah said he could be treated as having lost his credentials and would in addition give the said person a cash reward of Rupees ten thousand.

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It was a very sound and open proposal for seeking a verdict but none came forward to a accept the challenge which only enhanced the value of the prophecy. The prophecy made on the other hand by Pandit Lek Ram about the fate of the Promised Messiah remained a dead letter.

When the feeling of Arya Samajist Hindus were inflamed against the Promised Messiah following the assassination of Pandit Lekh Ram, he received numerous annonymous letters threatening him with death. None however darad hurt those whom God choose to save.

In the context of the Lekh Ram affair it is pertinent to

note an incident which lends a clue to the extreme jealousy of the Promised Messiah for the honour of the Holy Prophet. Soon after his propheey relating to Lekh Ram was published, the Promised Messiah happend to be at the platform of Lahore Railway Station in the course of a journey when Pandit Lekh Ram who was also coincidentally there, on learning of the Promised Messiah being thereabout, called on him and saluted him as he approached near. The Promised Messiah did not acknowledge the greeting. Pandit Lekh Ram thought that he had perhaps not heard him. He then turned to the other side and again salu ed the Promised Messiah who still kept silent. Some members of his party then invited his attention to the fact telling him that Pandit Lekh Ram was there offering him his salutation. The Promised Messiah answered back: "He abuses our Master but offers us greetings."

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It should not however be understood on account of this incident that the Promised Messiah was not given to having social contact with opponents of Islam. He had in fact dealings with many non-Muslims and even consorted with them with affectionate regard and great generosity of heart. But when Pandit Lekh Ram exceeded all limits of modesty in his hostility towards Islam and used highly scurrilous invective against the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) it was to much for his sense of honour to condescend to have any sort of contact with such a person, particularly when having entered the field of *Mubahila* against him, Pandit Lekh Ram had incurred an impending curse of God.

Invitation to the Queen to Join Islam

The Promised Messiah was in principle a believer in cooperation with the government of the day and laid especial emphasis on it and constantly enjoined upon his community the duties of peaceful and loyal citizenship. He thus did duty as a peaceful and loyal citizen but his duty as a reformer yet remained. This he did by means of a publication

entitled "Tuhfa-e-Qalsariyya" (A present to the Queen). It embodied his invitation to the Queen to Islam coached in enchanting language and choice form The volume, beautifully bound, was despatched with a covering letter to the Queen. Thus did he follow the precedent laid by the Holy Founder of Islam in his call-to-Islam to the Emperors of Byzantium and Iran.

The Queen Victoria thanked him for his book and promised to study it. But the faith of monarche is, as a rule, subject to their political interests, therefore the message had no definite outcome as there was little definitive expected as its result. Similarly the Promised Messiah invited the Amir of Kabul to accept the truthfulness of his claim through a communication which has remained unpublished. In his letter to the Amir, the Promised Messiah advised him that if he entertained any misgivings about his credentills, he could keep his views in reserve and yet assist him in his compaign in the service of Islam, for, he argued, that was the common mission of all Muslims and that Islam was in grave peril from all sides at the time. The Amir did not acknowledge the letter.

Murder Charge against Promised Messiah

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Different communities of India, viewing with concern the growing popularity and prosperity of the Promised Messiah's mi sion, contrived to involve him in serious cases with the intention of making him suffer severe legal penalty and contrived to harm him otherwise. His house search in connection with the murder of Pandit Lekh Ram was an offshoot of this concerted effort. But when it failed a criminal suit was filed against him, charging him with attempted murder, by Christian missionaries, in the hope that government machinery might move with greater expeditiousness in favour of their co-religionist padres. Arya Samajists and some non-Ahmadi Muslims also lent themselves to this dirty move. Rev. Dr Martin Clarke filed the complaint against the Promised Messiah alleging that he had employed a

youthful Muslim to assassinate him. A loafar Muslim youth was produced before the court as an approver. A well known Arya Samajist advocate appeared free for the prosecution and Maulvi Muhammad Hu·sain Batalvi appeared as a prosecution witness. A vast drag net was laid to ensnare the Promised Messiah. But no harm came to him as God was by him. God so contrived that the approver's attitude during the examination-in-chief gave rise to grave suspicion in the mind of the impartial District Magistrate, Captain Doglus. He began to smell a conspiracy behind the case and made closer investigation, ordering the removal of the 'approver' from the custody of Padres to that of the Police. When pressed for a truthful statement, the youth deposed that it was untrue that he had been employed or tutored by the Promised Messiah and declared that his previovs statement implicating the Promised Messiah had been made at the instance of the Padres. The Promised Messiah was acquitted with honour and his persecutor gained nothing but a disgraceful mark of odium in addition to discomfiture.

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Treatment of the enemy

Two remarkable incidents that took place during the course of the trial throw great light on certain traits of the Promised Messiah's excellence of character. When Maulvi Muhammad Hussain Batalvi appeared as a prosecution witness against him in support of the Christian missionaries with a view to getting the Promised Messiah convicted, the Promised Messiah's counsel proceeded to expose his personal and family affairs during the course of his cross examination, since the demolition of his status as a principal prosecution witness was calculated to benefit the Promised Messiah. But the latter sternly warned his counsel against the step and deprecated the idea of such a type of cross-examination. His attitude greatly impressed the defence-counsel who happened to be a non-Ahmadi. He very often would mention the incident as something marvellous that the Promised Messiah did on the occasion to save his enemy from disgrace

at grave risk to his own person.

The other incident occurred when the Magistrate announcing his judgment acquitting the Promised Messiah advised him that since he had been falsely charged with malifide intent by the prosecution, he was entitled in law to proceed against the complainant. The Promised Messiah said he had no mind to do so and that God had acquitted him as He had promised to do and that He was His protector and he therefore would not proceed against his persecutors for indemnification. It did not fail to impress those who were present on the occasion.

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A Grand Discovery Concerning Jesus Christ

The Promised Messiah had a burning enthusiasm for the establishment of the true unity of God in the world and it was his heartfelt desire that the man-made deities should at any cost fall to pieces before the One True God. In his eyes Jesus Christ was the biggest of all the fictitious deities. He used to observe that by coining this false belief of the Divinity of Jesus after the death of Christ, [the Christians had reared up a tower of immense inequity. He considered its demolition as his greatest mission. When God revealed it to him that the belief that the Jesus Christ (peace be on him) was alive and had ascended the heavens were false and that he died like other mortal human beings after completing his earthly term of life, he propagated this idea with excessive zeal very extensively, laying stress in his writings and speeches that Jesus had passed away like all other mortals. He had two objects before him: firstly to demolish the idea of polytheism and establish the belief of the Unity of the Divine Being and secondly to invite public attention to his own God-granted office.

During the whole of the period following the above revelation, the Promised Messiah did not content himself with the bare assertion that Jesus Christ had died like any other mortal. He engaged himself in seeking insight into what became of Jesus

after the incident of the Cross and sought clues concerning his whereabouts after his escape from crucifixin and finally sought to discover his last resting-place. In the end his research was rewarded with success and in unearthing the relevant clues, he ultimately brought to light this longhidden mystery.

In 1898, the Promised Messiah announced that Jesus Christ was no doubt put to the cross but did not breathe his last there. On the contrary, on account of grievous pain he fell into a swoon and was, through the efforts of some of his supporters and the covert sympathy of some government officials, taken off the Cross while still unconscious.. And that after being removed from the cross, his bones were not broken as was the prevalent custom in the country and that he was handed over to sympathisers. A section of the Christians have been subscribing to this view in a hazy sort of manner. But the Promised Messiah not only threw further light on this viewpoint but by pushing his enquiry much further proved that not only did Jesus Christ escape from the cross but that he was healed to a certain extent after treatment. But since there was a great ferment against him in the country and his personal appearance after the incident of the Cross was liable to expose him to grave risks, he therefore made secretly good his escape from the country after he had recovered a bit from the injuries he had received on the Cross and finally, in his search for the lost sheep of Israel, reached Kashmir where he lived to the ripe old age of 120 years and died a natural death and lies buried in Srinagar, Khanyar avenue, where his tomb is still intact and is considered to be one of the ancient tombs of Kashmir and is traditionally believed in Kashmir to be the resting-place of a Prince Prophet who hailed from a foreign land. It is a well-established fact of history that the people of the Kashmir valley are descendants of a tribe of Israel who came away from their ancestral home-land in a remote period of history. The Promised Messiah further proved that the ointment employed to cure the wounds of Jesus Christ was to be found in old medicine books as *Marham-i-Isa*

Or Jesus' ointment. He also established the fact that some of the disciples too came to India in the footsteps of the Master. This research is so important and has such comprehensive weightiness that once it has been recognized as authentic by world opinion, Christianity will have been razed to the ground. For, it strikes boldly at the three main pillars that sustain the structure of Christianity, namely Divinity of Jesus, Trinity and vicarious atonement—these will topple over flat. Those among the Muslims who are expecting the Messiah to come down from heavens will likewise become disappointed and turn to Ahmadiyyat. It is true that Christian scholars have not yet endorsed the findings of the Promised Messiah but when his research is established in the light of historic truth and reason, it makes no difference whether a particular people accept it or not. The Promised Messiah did not make a bare assertion. He gave cogent proofs deduced from historical records and from the Bible and the events before the incident of the Cross and events that followed it, the statement of Jesus and the story of his disciples. He proved with the help of evidence drawn from the history of Syria and Kashmir that Jesus Christ after his escape following the incident of the Cross, made his way slowly through India to Kashmir and died there in the end. But in Palestine and Syria Charistianity donned a totally novel garment at the hand of St. Paul. As against this in Kashmir original theistic teachings remained intact and were later absorbed in Islam. It was therefore that both the forms of Christianity never came into contact and the interventing curtain was never raised.

It should not however be understood that the attack that the Promised Messiah mounted against Christianity was based solely on the thesis relating to the dicovery of the tomb of Jesus. In fact it was only an auxiliary argument. His greatest stress was on the death of Jesus - that is that Jesus did not ascend to the heavens but that he died a natural death. Besides this, he subjected in his books to such powerful criticism

the fundamentals of Christianity - Divinity of the Messiah, Trinity and Redemption that the whole edifice of Christian religion is shaken to its very foundations. He proved that to begin with Jesus had never laid claims to divinity and that even if for the sake of argument he had put in some such claim, the life of Messiah belied all contentions favouring such a claim and that there is not a shred of evidence that could lead to the belief that he had any divine attribute in his person. About Trinity he expressed the view that it was a wholly polytheistic tenet which could not be a source of comfort to the heart of any normal human being and further that it embodied a slur on the very Divinity of God Himself. In regard to redemption he held the view that it was an unnatural and profane belief which had no natural relation with forgiveness of sins and reformotion of human mind : on the contrary according to him the belief encouraged sinfulness. In short his literature on Christianity is of such excellent value that no impartial student can, after its perusal condone the current beliefs of Christian faith. The sensible section among Christians realize well that the Ahmadiyya Movement carries a message of death for Christology.

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First School Founded in Qadian

Since during this period the Promised Messiah and his followers encountered an incresing tempo of hostility and at the same time the community was making steady progress, two new landmarks were added to the community activity under the guidance and with the express consent of the Promised Messiah. A school was founded in Qadian for giving education to the youngsters of the Jamaat. The step was taken to train children in the atmosphere congenial to the ideals of the movement instead of in surroundings poisoned with unhealthy influences. The idea was that the young generation should be brought

up in the spirit of Islamic traditions and teachings. The institution grew with the present day Talimul Islam High School in due course of time. The school was affiliated with the education department of the Provincial Government. A theology course was an additional subject which included study of the Holy Quran and of the Ahmadiyya literature. The principal aim was that the youngsters should receive their training in the atmosphere of the Ahmadiyya milieu and should through personal contact with the Promised Messiah and pious elders of the community imbibe the true spirit of the movement. It is very heartening to note that by the grace of God the school has well and successfully served the purpose. The school started at a primary level and grew into a high level institution during the life time of the Promised Messiah. Many of the missionaries of the movement and other prominent workers of the community organization are its old students. The Promised Messiah appointed a committee to manage the affairs of the school,

The Promised Messiah had long expressed a with that the centre shou'd have a publicity organ of its own. In the year 1898, his wish was fulfilled. A weekly journal was issued from Qadian with the object of propagating the teachings of the movement, publishing the day-to-day activity of the centre and serve as a means of training and educating the members of the *Jamaat*. The community owned a Press since 1893 but had no journal of its own. This weekly was named *Alhakam* and though not officially - managed by the community and was owned by an enthusiastic youth, Sheikh Yaqub Ali Turab (alias Irfani)

and owed its existence to his individual enterprise, was to all intents and purpose a mouthpience of the community and was under its overall surveilance and met an important requirement of the Jamaat. This weekly appeared originally from Amritsar in 1897 but was removed to Qadian in 1898.

Four years later i.e. in 1902, another paper entitled Albadr started. Both did very good service jointly to the movement during the lifetime of the Promised Messiah who would often call these journals two arms of the community.

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(To be continued)

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